

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 05371 091203 Z

43

ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1028

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, MCAP, UK, FR

SUBJECT: TIMES SAYS NIXON AGREES TO ANGLO- FRENCH NUCLEAR LINK

1. CHARLES DOUGLAS- HOME REPORTS IN MAY 9 " TIMES" THAT
" PRESIDENT NIXON WILL RAISE NO OBSTACLE TO THE FORMATION OF
AN ANGLO- FRENCH NUCLEAR PARTNERSHIP, ACCORDING TO SOURCES
ON BOTH SIDES OF THE CHANNEL." BOTH GOVERNMENTS, SAYS HOME,
HAVE BEEN TOLD PRIVATELY BY THE WHITE HOUSE THAT PRESIDENT
NIXON WOULD NOT INHIBIT UK FROM PASSING TO FRANCE " SOME OF
THE NUCLEAR SECRETS" ACQUIRED FROM US UNDER THE 1958 TREATY.

2. HOME NOTES THAT WHILE MC MAHON ACT OF 1946 PROVIDES THAT
NUCLEAR INFORMATION NOT TO BE GIVEN TO OTHER PARTIES, IT
ALLOWS EXCEPTIONS FOR COUNTRIES WHICH, BY THEIR OWN EFFORTS,
HAD REACHED AN INDEPENDENT NUCLEAR STATUS. " FRANCE' S NUCLEAR
PROGRAMME", SAYS " TIMES", " MORE THAN QUALIFIES NOW FOR THIS
KIND OF HELP."

3. HOME SAYS THAT ALTHOUGH HEATH WAS FIRST TO RAISE THE IDEA
OF AN ANGLO- FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCE, THE BRITISH HAVE BEEN VERY
RELUCTANT TO PREJUDICE THEIR SPECIAL STATUS WITH US THROUGH
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PAGE 02 LONDON 05371 091203 Z

" PREMATURE NUCLEAR INTIMACY" WITH THE FRENCH. FRANCE HAS RECENTLY ASKED UK FOR DETAILS OF ROYAL NAVY TRAINING OF PERSONNEL FOR SUBMARINES. " BRITAIN HANDLED THE REQUEST WITH EXTREME CAUTION, CLAIMING THAT AMERICANS HAD ALREADY COMPLAINED". THE FRENCH MAINTAIN THAT THE BRITISH HAVE ALWAYS INSISTED THERE CAN BE NO MOVEMENT ON NUCLEAR COOPERATION UNTIL WASHINGTON AGREES; THE BRITISH SAY THAT FRANCE' S REAL INTENTIONS WERE CLOUDED AND OVERSHADOWED BY THE HOSTILITY OF FORMER FRENCH DEFENSE MINISTER DEBRE. IT IS STILL TOO SOON TO KNOW HOW HIS DEPARTURE WILL AFFECT FRENCH NUCLEAR POLICY.

4. BRITISH AUTHORITIES DO NOT YET FEEL, SAYS HOME, THAT AMERICAN APPROVAL WILL BE FOLLOWED AUTOMATICALLY BY AN ANGLO- FRENCH AGREEMENT. THERE IS ALSO CONCERN IN LONDON AND PARIS " THAT THE WATERGATE AFFAIR WILL REDUCE MR. NIXON' S AUTHORITY TO CHANGE THE PREVAILING HOSTILITY TO THE IDEA IN CONGRESS." ANNENBERG

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